



NEWS RELEASE

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Colorado Canyon Association Recognized for its Community Stewardship and Youth Education

Recognizing outstanding work in support of BLM programs, the Bureau of Land Management's Janet Ady, Division Chief of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships recently presented Colorado's Colorado Canyon Association (CCA) with the BLM's 2016 "Public Lands Partnership Excellence" Award. The Friends group was selected among five BLM partnerships nominated by the BLM State Offices.

"The BLM's partnership with Colorado Canyon Association has been invaluable to increasing local community involvement and promoting land stewardship and youth education within the National Conservation Lands and beyond," Ady said at an awards ceremony in Spokane, Washington, on March 8th.

Colorado Canyon Association has made great strides to improve community stewardship and youth education in western Colorado's three BLM National Conservation Areas (NCA), (Dominguez-Escalante NCA, McInnis Canyons NCA, and Gunnison Gorge NCA). "The local BLM office is lucky to have such a strong partner in the management of rural western Colorado's public lands." NCA Manager Collin Ewing said "Colorado Canyons Association does an amazing job engaging local school kids and citizens in their education and stewardship programs in the National Conservation Areas."

CCA has developed several high quality education programs allowing youth the opportunity to learn about public lands and natural resources in an outdoor classroom environment. In the past year the CCA has formalized the curriculum for these programs to meet Colorado state education standards, and allow for teachers, volunteers and partners to step in and help deliver these programs into the future.

In addition to education programs, CCA organized and carried out three volunteer events as well as two citizen science projects in the McInnis Canyons and Dominguez-Escalante NCAs. CCA also organized and promoted the 2015 National Public Lands day event in Gunnison Gorge NCA that included trail work to improve public access to an important cultural site along the Gunnison River. CCA organized the Dominguez-Escalante riparian area monitoring project and McInnis Canyons trail monitoring program where

local community members collect valuable riparian inventory data and trail condition data to inform BLM management decisions.

Joe Neuhoﬀ, CCA Executive Director said “ CCA is fortunate to have local partners at the Bureau of Land Management dedicated to our shared vision of engaging students and the community on these world-class landscapes. Public-private partnerships are a powerful tool for good in our community and I hope our work with BLM is a model for others who share a vision for community involvement in our public lands”

Bob Silbernagel CCA board president said, “One of the many joys of serving on the Colorado Canyons Association board is working with people of many backgrounds and interests who share a passion for the BLM’s national conservation areas in Colorado, and who are eager to work with the BLM to help preserve and maintain these lands. Additionally, it is a treat to help provide educational events for thousands of youngsters on these lands each year, many of whom have had little experience with their public lands. All of this is possible because of the great partnership that has long existed between CCA, the BLM and the Western Slope community.”

The award was presented during the annual convention of the Association of Partners for Public Lands—the umbrella organization for interpretive associations and friends groups that have formal agreements with federal and state agencies.

The Public Lands Partnership Excellence Award is presented biannually, and recognizes an interpretive association or friends group has demonstrated exceptional support for the agency’s interpretive, educational, and/or public outreach programs. BLM partnerships were judged on their excellent contributions towards enhancing public awareness and understanding of the public lands and providing diverse programs and products.

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